

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2212

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2438

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GY, CU, VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN CONCERN OVER CUBAN PRESENCE IN
GUYANA

REF: A. GEORGETOWN 394, B. CARACAS 2265, C. LUERS/ASENCIO
TELCON (3/2/76)

CAUTION: PROPRIETARY INFORMATION INVOLVED

1. DCM WAS CALLED IN TO FOREIGN MINISTRY BY VICE MINISTER
GOMEZ MANTELLINI TO DISCUSS SUBJECT. PRESENT WITH VICE
MINISTER WAS CHIEF OF BOUNDARIES DIVISION, AMBASSADOR ROJAS
CABOT.

2. GOMEZ MANTELLINI STATED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY
HAD RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE GUYANESE FOREIGN MINISTER
IN WHICH ALL ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF CUBANS

IN GUYANA WERE DENIED. THERE WAS A SPECIFIC
DENIAL THAT THE GUYANESE WERE PROVIDING STOPOVER AND
REFUELING FACILITIES FOR CUBAN PLANES EN ROUTE TO
ANGOLA. THE VICE MINISTER SAID THAT THEY KNEW THAT ONE
WAS A LIE AND THEY WERE ALSO SUSPICIOUS OF THE OTHER
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DISCLAIMERS. HE ASKED HOWEVER THAT WE RESPECT THE

CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE EXCHANGE WITH THE GUYANESE. THE GOV, HE SAID, WAS UPSET AND HIGHLY CONCERNED ABOUT REPORTS ON THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN GUYANA AND HE ALSO MADE REFERENCE TO THE RESUMEN STORY (CARACAS 2218).

3. THE DCM DREW ON THE CONTENTS OF REFTEL A WHEREUPON THE VICE MINISTER PRODUCED A REPORT FROM HIS OWN

AMBASSADOR IN GUYANA WHICH WAS REMARKABLY SIMILAR IN CONTENT AND TONE. THE PRINCIPAL DIFFERENCE WAS

ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON THE PRESENCE OF POLES, EAST GERMANS AND RUSSIANS. THE NUMBER OF CUBANS WAS PLACED AT PRECISELY 129.

4. THE VICE MINISTER SAID THAT HE WAS PARTIALLY REASSURED BY OUR REPORT AND BELIEVED THAT THE GOV'S ATTITUDE WOULD DE-ESCALATE FROM ITS PRESENT DEEP CONCERN TO ONE OF PERHAPS DISCOMFORT BUT NOT ALARM. THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO WATCH THE SITUATION CAREFULLY, HE ADDED, AND WOULD APPRECIATE OUR PASSING TO THE GOV

ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WE MAY ACQUIRE. HE SAID THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIVISION OF BOUNDARIES WAS SENDING SOME OFFICERS TO THE BORDER AREA ON ROUTINE MISSIONS WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO BE ALERT FOR ANY INFORMATION ON THE PRESENCE OF CUBANS. CAUTION: PROPRIETARY INFORMATION INVOLVED.
SHLAUDEMAM

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